



## PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, January 17, 2007

8:00 a.m.

Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board

Lawrence, MA 01840

**Members Present:** Peter Matthews, Chair  
Donna Gambon, Charles LoPiano, Shirley Callan

**Members Absent:** Sal Lupoli, Pedro Arce, Karen Sawyer-Faust

**Staff Present:** Fred Carberry, Betty Kirk, Mary Kivell

**Guests Present:** Arthur Chilingirian, Mike Lynch, Amy Weatherbee

### 1. **Approval of Minutes of 12/14/06**

Mr. Matthews called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and called for a motion on the minutes of the 12/14/06 meeting.

**Motion Charles LoPiano seconded by Shirley Callan to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2006 meeting as submitted. Motion passed.**

There was a request to move items 5 & 6 up on the agenda to allow Mr. Chilingirian to leave for another commitment.

**Motion by Charles LoPiano seconded by Donna Gambon to move items 5 & 6 up on the agenda. Motion passed.**

### 2. **Transfer of Title I Adult Funds**

Arthur Chilingirian explained that according to reports generated by the Fiscal Department, the VWCC as expended/obligated all of their FY06 and FY07 WIA Title I Individual Training Account (ITA) funds for Low Income Adults. Also, under Needs Related Payments and Supportive Services for WIA Title I Adults there is a balance of \$23,210.24 which will go unused because there is no funding for future WIA Title I Adult on ITA's.

Chili said that the reallocation of \$20,000 from the Needs Related Payments and Supportive Service line item to the WIA Title I Adult only ITA line item will give VWCC the ability to service up to an additional four (4) WIA Title I Adults with Individual Training Accounts (vouchers) in training and still have a remaining balance of \$3,210.24

in Needs Related Payments and Supportive Services for customers needs. This is his recommendation.

Discussion followed on whether there is a leeway given to make some of these administrative adjustments in funds. Amy said that it is good for the committee to know and that they try to keep money in client training funds by virtue of how it comes in. She also wanted the committee to know that clients are already enrolled in intensive services but we cannot fund training.

Fred Carberry asked what types of training clients were getting and Amy said that clients are enrolled in health care as CNAs and Medical Assistants with GEDs, electronics and some CDL. She said that at the next meeting she would provide a breakdown of training as of 12/30/06 but also said that they look to provide training in critical and emerging industries.

**Motion by Chick LoPiano seconded by Shirley Callan to transfer \$20,000 from Needs Related Payments and Supportive Service line item to the WIA Title I Adult only ITA line item. Motion passed.**

Planning Committee Chairman Peter Matthews said that it is helpful learning how things operate and mentioned that if needing to come before the committee prohibits getting the job done to let the committee know and they could consider procedural changes.

### **3. Discussion on Career Center Chartering**

Arthur Chilingirian then spoke about the Career Center Chartering referencing a summary of review and recommendations provided to the committee. After meeting with the WIB staff to discuss some changes to the charter for future implementation he said that they are recommending the length of time be changed from the original two years to five years to align with the WIB's five-year planning process to provide an opportunity to define longer-term strategies to address continuous quality improvement activities as well as the emerging planning priorities defined in the five-year planning process. This five-year charter will require a submission of an annual business plan for One-Stop services.

Regarding applying the Baldrige standards Chili said their recommendation would be to enhance the focus of Continuous Quality Improvement as it relates to all aspects of their services and becomes a way of improving their business operations. VWCC has initiated a continuous quality improvement process with training of management and line staff in basic planning processes and CQI terminology. He noted that Baldrige needs resources and there are other awards that show excellence and best practices.

Peter Matthews said that Baldrige is a long-term commitment that requires money and is a massive undertaking. It is a good process by takes years in the making. He said that it is important to have some sort of continuous quality improvement and that it is most important to get an attitude change from staff.

Chili said that they have monthly team meetings that are not limited to Baldrige criteria. Donna Gambon said that it is a good springboard to involve staff in CQI and gives them more ownership of work habits.

Chili said that they have committees on job seekers, employers, leadership, human resources (Betty Kirk chairs his committee), measurement analysis, strategic planning, and process improvement.

Fred Carberry said that improving services of the Career Center, instead of focusing on criteria, is the way to go and expects that there will be a draft charter for the April WIB meeting.

The consensus of the committee is that we are moving in the right direction.

#### **4. Performance Update**

Amy Weatherbee said that she generates a report quarterly which is numbers driven and which will be put in a narrative form for the full board. She proceeded to go over the Second Quarter Report. The first page shows numbers of participants against the Annual Plan numbers. She said that she added a breakdown of employers which she said will exceed our goal.

Peter Matthews asked whether we had a partnership with CLASS and Arthur Chilingirian said that we are in the process of hiring a Disabilities Navigator and that CLASS is part of a disabilities group the Navigator works with. The purpose is for the Navigator to assist people with disabilities through the system and in the past the Navigator has assisted the Career Center in securing accessibility equipment for the Center.

Donna Gambon reported that they had hired a Veteran's rep who is working with 30 active veterans and that in November the Center does a job fair for veterans.

Amy continued with page 2 which highlights the customer breakdown for the region. She noted that 12.5% of customers are from Southern New Hampshire.

There was discussion on satellite offices where unemployment is high noting that often times it is fiscally restricted. Mike Lynch suggested as part of the TQI initiative a committee look at what type of services are needed in a given area and involve employers. It was noted that a Business Services Representative (BSR) is working with employers in the northeast region. Chick LoPiano said that his agency found that the consolidation of services worked better for them.

Amy also mentioned the need to go out to bid for space as more space is needed in Haverhill where the layout is poor. She also cited that larger space for workshops and computers and the need to fold in Lucent to share resources. Amy said that the WIB should be on the review committee and partner in the RFP review process as they have in the past.

The next pages deal with participant characteristics and the WIA Title I Adult program that has problems with getting clients into training. She also noted the WIA Dislocated

Worker Program is at 105% of plan and the fact that there is a major concern with what might happen with Malden Mills.

Amy next addressed the WIA Title I Youth Program noting that there is a chunk of money that needs to be RFP'd for both in school and out of school programming. She also mentioned that there are recruitment issues she will be bringing to the Youth Council at their next meeting.

She distributed an updated National Emergency Grants (NEG) sheet with statistics on the Lucent and Smith & Nephew grants.

Ms. Weatherbee said that the final three sheets are new to the report and that she added them for information on the survey system set up through the CQI initiative. They contain feedback on the membership desk, resource room, WIA training participants and employers/business surveys.

#### **5. Workforce Training Fund Update for FY'06, FY'07 as of November, 2006**

Fred Carberry said that the WIB does provide extra information that is beneficial to area employers regarding the Workforce Training Fund. This is a state program. When a company in our region applies the state forwards their application to the WIB for review and comment.

Betty Kirk provided two spread sheets on funding for this region noting that for FY'06 our region received \$539,200 for area companies. Peter Matthews stated that this is a wonderful program and that his company has been a recipient in the past.

Betty then said that as of 11/06 for FY'07 this region is doing quite well with \$874,768 in awards thus far. The training applied for is mainly in lean manufacturing and if an applicant is denied, technical assistance is offered and they can reapply. Also, once an applicant is funded they can submit additional applications for funding after one year.

#### **6. Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund Update**

Fred explained there is a collaboration of WIBs working on health care network learning. He said that the board had instructed him to collaborate with the Greater Lowell and North Shore WIBs on this initiative. Fred said that he and Betty Kirk had a productive meeting with them and that the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund RFP was due out this week.

We have also been meeting with the Metro Southwest WIB and could possibly pilot with two or three nursing homes in the Merrimack Valley. Anyone is eligible to apply for this funding and we can endorse more than one application.

Betty Kirk mentioned that Middleton Aerospace has moved to the Lucent site and is in need of trained workers. Fred said that we could consider a joint application with North Shore and Lowell on manufacturing geared towards high tech as there are fewer skills machinists coming out of school. He also said that banking and finance as well as older workers could be considered for this funding.

Betty Kirk said that a good initiative could be health care, travel and tourism and older workers. She said that there is \$978,000 available for the north east region. Betty also said that if an application comes in, this committee should look at it. The applicants are required to present their application to the local WIB but Betty said that she is not clear if the WIB is endorsing them.

Discussion then followed on contacting Middleton Aerospace, customized programs and involving the community college. It was mentioned that it would be a good for the WIB Task Force to explore with vocational technical schools.

**7. Adjournment**

**Having no further business Shirley Callan made a motion to adjourn seconded by Donna Gambon. Motion passed.**

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Kivell  
Recorder